

ECONOMICS OF TRADE UNIONS AND LABOUR  
ECONOMICS EC2156B-650  
Department of Economics  
Western University

**January 2022**

**General Information:**

**Delivery:** Online, asynchronous. Times are according to Eastern time zone ET (EST/EDT).

**Course website:** <https://owl.uwo.ca/portal>

**Instructor:** Deanna Walker

**Office:** SSC 4035 (not in use at this time)

**Phone:** 519661-2111 x.85452 (not in use at this time)

**E-mail:** [dwalke44@uwo.ca](mailto:dwalke44@uwo.ca)\*\*

\*\*subject line must include “2156” and your uwo.ca address must be the sender

**Office hours:** I am available by zoom Mondays 9am-11am ET. If no one is attending I will answer emails at that time.

I will send class messages via OWL ([no-reply@uwo.ca](mailto:no-reply@uwo.ca)) to your uwo.ca address.

**Undergraduate inquiries:** 519-661-3507 or SSC Room 4075 or [econugrd@uwo.ca](mailto:econugrd@uwo.ca)

**Registration:**

You are responsible for ensuring you are registered in the correct courses. If you are not registered in this course, the Department will not release any of your marks until your registration is corrected. You may check your timetable by using the Login on the Student Services website at <https://student.uwo.ca>. If you notice a problem, please contact your home Faculty Academic Counsellor immediately.

**Prerequisite Note:** The prerequisite(s) for this course is (are) [Economics 1021A/B](#) and [Economics 1022A/B](#), or [Economics 2001A/B](#).

You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites, and that you have not taken any anti-requisite courses. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as a basis for appeal. If you are found to be ineligible for a course, you may be removed from it at any time and you will receive no adjustment to your fees. This decision cannot be appealed.

If you find that you do not have the course prerequisites, it is in your best interest to drop the course well before the end of the add/drop period. Your prompt attention to this matter will not only help protect your academic record, but will ensure that spaces become available for students who require the course in question for graduation.

**Course Objectives:**

The economic and legal aspects of labour relations will be approached under some or all of the following headings: the history and origin of the trade union movement, the economics of trade unions, labour law, wage/price controls and the relationship of unions, firms and governments.

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

- Students will recognize the rationales and effects of union interventions in the labour market as well as various government and legislative influences.
  
- Students will apply the assumptions and predictions of basic labour market and union models in order to make outcome predictions and explain related policy implications in terms of economic theory.
  
- Students will interpret issues arising in labour relations in order to evaluate outcomes in hypothetical, historical, and/or contemporary situations.

**Textbook(s):**

Benjamin, Gunderson, Lemieux, Riddell, *Labour Market Economics*, 8th edition, McGrawHill Ryerson, 2017

Benjamin, Gunderson, Lemieux, Riddell, *Labour Market Economics*, 9th edition, McGrawHill Ryerson, 2021

Either edition is suitable. Supplemental material and other references will be posted on OWL.

**Expectations:**

**A.** Students are responsible at all times throughout the term for stable and reliable internet connection as well as compatible electronic devices and software. You may be asked to submit work in pdf format. Unless otherwise specified, the following are all acceptable: work created by tablet, annotated pdf, a scan or photograph of written work converted to pdf.

**B.** Students are expected to have competence in prerequisite topics, and to independently follow instructions and submit work with accuracy. The student bears all responsibility for errors, clerical or otherwise. Failure to abide by instructions given may also result in penalties.

**C.** To pass the course, a student must complete all components of the course. If any component has not been completed, a pass will not be granted regardless of the grade on the remaining components.

Students are expected to work consistently throughout the term. This includes on-time completion of each unit's readings and OWL lesson work, participation in OWL forum discussion posting, and working through problem sets for submission.

This course also has a final examination. A student who fails to maintain good standing throughout the term including satisfactory engagement, may be prohibited from writing the

final examination. (See the university's Attendance Regulations for Examinations and also the Policy Regarding Class Attendance and Engagement in the Please Note appendix to this course outline.)

**D.** Students are responsible at all times for clear articulation and reading comprehension. Work which shows a lack of proficiency in English may either be failed or, at the discretion of the instructor, returned to the student for revision to a literate level.

**E.** Students will be held to the [Student Code of Conduct](#). All submissions in this course are required to be your own, individual work. You must properly acknowledge anyone else's words or ideas which you use and you must follow any instructions given regarding authorized exam materials. Examination may be subject to proctoring by Zoom. The final exam and all coursework are not collaborative.

**Plagiarism, whether intentional or unintentional, will be treated as a scholastic offence.** A helpful tutorial with quizzes for self-testing is available at [http://lib.usm.edu/plagiarism\\_tutorial.html](http://lib.usm.edu/plagiarism_tutorial.html). Assessments in this course may be subject to Turnitin analysis.

### **Copyright:**

All course materials are protected by copyright law.

Copyright protection on course material includes lectures, power point presentations, outlines, and similar materials. Students may take notes and make copies of course materials for their own educational purposes. Students may not make recordings, reproduce (or allow others to reproduce), post or distribute lecture notes, wiki material, and other course materials publicly and/or for commercial purposes without written consent of the instructor.

### **Topics Covered and Relevant Chapters:**

Units are two weeks long and begin on Wednesdays.

Unit 1: Unions and the Labour Market (Ch 1, 8)

- Competitive labour market model and Neoclassical predictions
- Special considerations about labour markets and function of the wage rate
- Do workers need union empowerment?

Unit 2: Labour Market Outcomes (Ch 5, 7)

- Competitive and Monopsonistic demand for labour
- Union effects on market outcomes under different market structures
- Can government regulation achieve worker objectives without unions?

Unit 3: Models of Union Behaviour and Bargaining (Ch 14, 14A)

- Overview of unions in Canada
- Union preferences - what do workers care about?
- Models of contract determination

Unit 4: Impact of Unions (Ch 15)

- Wage differentials and effects of unions across sectors
- How unions affect non-wage outcomes

Unit 5: Labour Supply (Ch 2)

- Participation and hours-of-work decision, special constraints
- Union influences on individual and market labour supply

Unit 6: Labour Demand (Ch 5, 6)

- Demand for labour in the presence of unions
- Labour and product market structures
- Quasi-fixed costs and compensation negotiation

The above list is tentative and may be modified as the course progresses.  
Supplemental material and other references will be posted on OWL.

**Grading:**

As described under “Expectations,” all components of the course must be completed in order to be given credit for the course. Upon meeting this requirement, the grade will be calculated as follows (note that late submissions count towards the completion requirement for the course credit, but will be graded as zero):

On-Time Lesson Work: 12%

Discussion Posts: 12%

Problem Sets: 36%

Final Exam: 40%

For each unit you will complete OWL lesson work and a forum discussion post followed by a problem set. Due dates (submission by 11:55 PM ET) are as follows:

<b>Material Coverage</b>	<b>Lesson &amp; Discussion</b>	<b>Problem Sets</b>
Unit 1	January 19*	January 26
Unit 2	February 2	February 9
Unit 3	February 16	March 2
Unit 4	March 9	March 16
Unit 5	March 23	March 30
Unit 6	April 6	April 13

\*Note all due dates fall on Wednesdays (ET).

The final examination will be scheduled by the Registrar. The final exam period is April 14-30.

Any missed or late components of the assessment must be submitted for the completion requirement, but will be receive a grade of zero. If the student's absence is formally excused (under extenuating circumstances or valid SRA), some form of accommodation will be offered as deemed appropriate by the instructor. Such accommodation will depend on the particulars of the situation and may involve altering the weight, coverage, length and/or format of the student's coursework at the instructor's discretion. Students who miss any assessments must follow Western University's procedures for approval of their absence in order to receive such an accommodation. See the 'Please Note' section of this course outline for details of these procedures.

**Tips on How to Be Successful in this Class:**

While this course is challenging in-person, it can be even more challenging online if you are not careful. Students should understand the level of autonomy and self-discipline required to be successful.

- Engagement begins with lesson and discussion work and progresses to more advanced problem sets, with weekly due dates to encourage you to stay on track.
- Do not be afraid to ask questions. It is intended that applications of the content will not be obvious and will require meticulous thought and deduction. If you are struggling with a topic, check the online discussion boards and/or make use of office hours.
- Do work earlier rather than later so that you can alternate with breaks and have time to digest or find help. The textbook is not written specifically for our subject, so depending on your background and aptitude you may find you need more time or effort than you would normally expect.
- In recognition of the particular challenges of this course, I have set up the course grade structure to encourage and reward participation and diligence in weekly work. It does make a difference (both directly and indirectly) if you achieve all available credit for participation and completion. Just keep in mind that as a result of this grade structure, interim grades in this course tend to be higher than final grades, so be sure to take this into account when gauging your standing during the term.

**Please Note**  
**Department & University Policies for Winter 2022**

The University expects all students to take responsibility for their own Academic Programs. Students should also check their registration to ensure they are enrolled in the correct courses.

1. **Guidelines, policies, and your academic rights and responsibilities** are posted online in the current Western Academic Calendar at: <http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca>. Claiming that “you didn’t know what to do” is not an acceptable excuse for not following the stated policies and procedures.
2. Students must familiarize themselves with the “**Rules of Conduct for Examinations**” [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/exam/administration.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/administration.pdf).
3. **Cheating as an academic offence:** Students are responsible for understanding what it means to “cheat.” The Department of Economics treats cheating incidents very seriously and will investigate any suspect behavior. Students found guilty will incur penalties that could include a failing grade or being barred from future registration in other Economics courses or programs. The University may impose further penalties such as suspension or expulsion.
4. **Plagiarism:** Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. When taking an idea/passage from another author, it must be acknowledged with quotation marks where appropriate and referenced with footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is an academic offence (see Scholastic Discipline for Undergraduate Students in the Western Calendar at [http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page\\_20](http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_20)).

Western University uses software to check for plagiarism and students may be required to electronically submit their work. Those found guilty will be penalized as noted in point 3.

5. It is a Department of Economics policy that **NO** assignments be dated, stamped or accepted by staff. Students must submit assignments to the instructor.
6. **Appeals:** University policies and procedures for appealing a mark can be found in the Student Academic Appeals section in the current Western Academic Calendar at: [http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page\\_14](http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_14). **Please note the relevant deadlines.**

Department of Economics procedures for appealing a mark can be found here: [https://economics.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program\\_counselling/responsibilities\\_policies.html#appeals](https://economics.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_counselling/responsibilities_policies.html#appeals). The Department will not consider an appeal unless an attempt has been made to settle the matter with the instructor first. Students who remain dissatisfied with the outcome may proceed to submit an appeal to [econugrd@uwo.ca](mailto:econugrd@uwo.ca). Please follow the instructions and use the appeal form shown in the above link.

7. **Systematic adjustments of a class grade distribution** (either up or down) can occur in Economics courses. The fact that grades have been adjusted is **not** grounds for an appeal.
8. Note the following **add and drop deadlines:**

Deadline to add a second term half course:  
Deadline to drop a second term half course:

**Tuesday January 18, 2022**  
**Monday March 14, 2022**

## **Policy Regarding Makeup Tests and Final Examinations**

Faculty of Social Science policy states that oversleeping or misreading an exam schedule is NOT grounds for a makeup. This rule applies to midterm and final exams in the Department of Economics.

## **Policies Regarding Academic Accommodation**

- The Faculty of Social Science's policies on academic accommodation are found at [https://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/academic\\_consideration.html](https://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/academic_consideration.html)
- **Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:** Students with disabilities or accessibility challenges should work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD, see [http://academicssupport.uwo.ca/accessible\\_education/index.html](http://academicssupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html)), which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).
- **Rewriting Exams and Retroactive Reweighting are NOT Permitted:** Students who proceed to write a test or examination must be prepared to accept the mark. Rewriting tests or examinations, or retroactive reweighting of marks, is **not** permitted. Self-Reported Absences cannot be used once a student has proceeded to start to write a test or exam.
- **Self-Reported Absences:** Students will have two opportunities during the fall and winter terms to receive academic consideration if they self-report a missed assessment using the online self-reported absence portal, provided the following conditions are met: the assessment is missed due to an absence of no more than 48 hours in duration, and the assessment for which consideration is being sought is worth 30% or less of the student's final grade. Students are expected to contact their instructors within 24 hours of the end of the period of the self-reported absence, unless noted otherwise on the syllabus. Students are not able to use the self-reporting option in the following circumstances:
  - for exams scheduled by the Office of the Registrar (e.g., final exams)
  - absence of a duration greater than 48 hours
  - assessments worth more than 30% of the student's final grade
  - if the student has opened or started the test or exam
  - if a student has already used the self-reporting portal twice during the fall/winter terms

If the conditions for a Self-Reported Absence are *not* met, students will need to provide a Student Medical Certificate (SMC) if the absence is medical or provide appropriate documentation if there are compassionate grounds for the absence in question. Students are encouraged to contact their Faculty academic counselling office for more information about the relevant documentation. It is strongly recommended that students notify the instructor as soon as possible, ideally before the assessment, when they become aware of

an absence. University policy is that students must communicate with their instructors no later than 24 hours after the end of the period covered by the SMC or immediately upon their return from their documented absence. Failure to follow University policy and procedures may result in denial of academic accommodation and a grade of zero.

- **Documentation for Accommodation:** Individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds or for other reasons. **All required documentation for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty.**
- **Western University policy on Consideration for Student Absence** is available here: [Policy on Academic Consideration for Student Absences - Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs](#).
- **Student Medical Certificate (SMC):** This form is available here: [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf)
- **Religious Accommodation:** Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

**Policy Regarding Class Attendance and Engagement:** If the instructor deems a student's attendance or engagement in the class to be unsatisfactory, that student may be prohibited from writing the final examination. Examples of unsatisfactory class engagement include frequent absences from an in-person or synchronous online class, lack of assignment submissions, and inadequate use of online course materials. Instructors who intend to make use of this policy will notify the student in advance.

**Statement on Mental Health and Support Services:** Students under emotional/mental distress should visit [https://uwo.ca/health/mental\\_wellbeing/](https://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/) for more information and a complete list of resources on how to obtain help.

**Statement on Remote Proctoring:** While Western intends to hold most classes, mid-terms and finals in-person, the London-Middlesex Health unity may require western to teach in a remote format. If this occurs, all assessments will be done remotely and may involve the use of remote proctoring software (i.e., Proctorio, ProctorTrack). Instructors will provide information on the details should the need arise.